



*In Honor of Carleton P. Merrill
Husband * Veteran * Alderman * Friend
September 3, 1924 – January 23, 2013*

NEWS, NOTES & REMINDERS – SEPTEMBER 25, 2013

NEWS & NOTES

- **Land Use Committee** – *All Board members are invited to attend.* The committee has scheduled additional meetings so we can finalize discussions on the Riverside and Indigo projects. We will be working with the Land Use Chair and Planning Director on how we will handle the format of these meetings. The additional committee meetings are scheduled for **Thursday, September 26th and Monday, September 30th at 7:45p.m.** in Room 222.
- **Risk Assessment Sub-committee** – The sub-committee of the *Financial Audit Advisory Committee* will be meeting on **Friday, September 27 at 8:00a.m.** in Room 222.
- **Newton-Waltham Veterans Softball Classic** – *All Board members are invited to attend.* The game is being held to show support for veterans, veteran's families and needed services being provided to them. The game will be at Forte Park, 235 California Street on **Tuesday, October 1st at 5:00p.m.** It will be a great night for the entire family! For more information please log onto to http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/parks/veterans_softball.asp

REMINDERS

- None at this time

WORKING GROUP UPDATES

- **Medical Marijuana** – *Submitted by Alderman Yates* – **Members:** Greg Schwartz, Brian Yates, Board of Aldermen, Dori Zaleznik, Commissioner of Health and Human Services, Chair, Candace Havens, Director of Planning and Development, Howard Mintz, Chief of Police, Marie Lawlor, Assistant City Solicitor.

Task: To develop guidance for where Marijuana Dispensaries can be located in the City in accordance with the State Referendum last year. Middlesex County has been allocated five dispensaries. Newton is likely to wind up with one. 47 entities have applied to the state Department of Public Health for certification as operators of dispensaries which may grow and

dispense medical marijuana in one location or separate ones. After the applicants have been cleared, they can apply to the city for any location in the city where the use is allowed. As of now, there is no definition of this use in our zoning so applicants could apply anywhere a comparable use is allowed and the Inspectional Services Department will be forced to determine if it is in fact an allowable use. For instance, it could be argued that the place of sale is comparable to a pharmacy and thus should be allowed anywhere a pharmacy is allowed including village centers. There has been discussion in the Committee as to where the use should be directed. The initial thought was to allow it in all business districts and all manufacturing districts. I have disagreed since all business districts would allow the use in village centers and several manufacturing districts are adjacent to residential areas. I have suggested targeting Business 2 and 5 and some of the Mixed Use Districts. If we do not enact ordinance language by the time the applicants are cleared, we run the risk of having applications for unsuitable sites. The Committee has docketed a short term moratorium on the uses to give us enough time to make final decisions.

➤ **Zervas School - Submitted by Ald. Ruthanne Fuller, Ald. John Rice and Ald. Deb Crossley**

The Request for Services (RFS) for an Owner's Project Manager (OPM) pre-proposal meeting and walk through took place on August 28, 2013 with over ten OPM firms in attendance. Thirteen firms provided written responses by the September 4th deadline. The Designer Selection Committee met on September 17th and narrowed the group to the following five firms:

Compass Project Management
Dore & Whittier Management Partners
Joslin Lesser & Associates
KV Associates
Skanska USA Building

These firms will be interviewed by the Designer Selection Committee on October 1st and 2nd. After the interviews, a recommendation will go from the DSC to the Mayor with the three top firms in rank order. We expect the selected firm to be announced shortly thereafter. In the meantime, we are moving ahead with drafting the RFS for architectural design and establishing the formal Zervas School Building Committee which includes community representatives. Once we have both the OPM and the architect on board, we will mimic the MSBA process. The two first steps are setting the student enrollment goal and undertaking a comprehensive feasibility study (e.g., existing conditions, space needs, educational program, site selection (current site, alternative sites), renovation/addition vs. new, design parameters, recommendation on the most cost effective and educationally appropriate preferred solution, options for swing space if needed). There have been two noteworthy personnel changes. Alderman Deb Crossley has joined the working group. Miriam Tuchman, the project manager for Zervas from Public Buildings, has taken another job and Adam Gilmore is now the project manager.

➤ **Water - Sewer – Stormwater – Submitted by Aldermen Deb Crossley & Ruthanne Fuller**

The WSS Working Group includes COO Bob Rooney, Utilities Director Fred Russell, Commissioner Dave Turocy, from Engineering Lou Taverna, as well as CFO Maureen Lemieux and her team, and Aldermen Fuller and Crossley. WSS met several times over the summer and about every two weeks since September. The following is to report progress implementing the strategic plan to remove inflow & Infiltration (I&I), restore/ add capacity to the public sewer

and water mains, remove illegal private inflow connections from the sewers, advance the stormwater assessment and complete the rates analysis for re-evaluation of the rate structure.

- SEWER & WATER MAINS

The city received bids in mid July and selected the low bidder, Green Mountain Utility Services, to provide construction services to clean and reline sewer mains in Project Area 1, repair a failed sewer main in the Crystal Lake basin and Woodland golf course, as well as to increase to fire flow standards designated water mains. The contract was executed September 9 and work is to begin in early October and proceed through the winter and into the spring of 2014. Remember that most of this work is done manhole to manhole so does not require digging up streets.

- PRIVATE ILLEGAL INFLOW REMOVAL PROGRAM

As reported in Public Facilities, the Utilities department hired a half time employee to focus entirely on completing this program. Notices have now been issued to 334 of 447 property owners where improper sump connections were identified during meter replacements; the remaining 113 will be sent by mid October. There has been a high response rate to these notices, and of those over 45% have complied and corrected the condition. The department follows up with a second notice either if there is no response, or if the owner does not follow through with repairs. The Utilities Department provides technical assistance to help homeowners identify a cost effective solution appropriate to each case.

- SMOKE TESTS

Weston & Sampson have been conducting smoke tests in areas of the city not previously tested, to identify improper connections to the sewers from rain leaders (downspouts) and driveway drains. Testing is preceded by bright yellow notices about a week in advance. The Utilities Department then follows up with homeowners with improper connections.

- STORMWATER ASSESSMENT

In the FY 14 budget the mayor allocated 100K from the Stormwater Enterprise Fund for a partial assessment of the stormwater system. An RFP was issued in June, and the city received three proposals: CDM, Weston & Sampson and Brown & Caldwell. Director Russell urged that interviews be conducted to better understand the scope of each and how far it would take us toward the goal of detailing a strategic plan for restoring the system. We are particularly interested to understand how new EPA and DEP regulations may impact the assessment and eventual scope of work. Interviews will be conducted next week and a vendor selected asap from that point. An objective is to complete this partial assessment in time to be incorporated into the overall plan for the stormwater system.

We continue to look at restructuring stormwater fees to tie them to the amount of impervious surface of commercial properties and the stormwater management mitigations commercial owners have in place. The Stormwater Enterprise Fund also must have sufficient revenue to complete the assessment, pay for ongoing maintenance and effect repairs to the system. We are as well looking as well at a more precise accounting for what it costs to maintain stormwater operations at a desired level and overlap with sewer work.

- RATES ANALYSIS

Water and sewer reserves are healthy and in the spring of 2013 the Board voted to separate funds that accrue beyond what is necessary to keep in Reserves - into a capital stabilization fund for each system - water, sewer and stormwater. An overall objective is to assure that rates are both fairly allocated as well as sufficient to run operations, pay the MWRA and continue the needed repairs on schedule. CFO Lemieux and her team continue to work with the Utilities accounting and billing to explore impacts on users under various scenarios – including second meters, applying a seasonal rate structure and /or adding more tiers. The department is crafting a response that Aldermen will be able to use to explain the study to constituents.

- SCHEDULE

The Administration has pushed back the schedule presenting the rates analysis. In early December, the administration is planning to provide an overview at a Public Facilities committee meeting, to which all Board members will be invited. A goal is to have a detailed presentation in January or February for the new Board, reviewing all elements of the plan for water, sewer and stormwater and as well getting into detail on possible rates restructuring.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Carr', is located on the left side of the page.